

Message Text

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PAGE 01 TABRIZ 00055 251258Z

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ACTION ORM-01

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 IO-10 ISO-00 DHA-02 AID-05 OMB-01

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05

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FM AMCONSUL TABRIZ

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INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS UNN

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN UNN

USMISSION GENEVA

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER

C O N F I D E N T I A L TABRIZ 0055

BEIRUT PASS BAGHDAD

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: SREF, PINS, IR, IZ

SUB: KURDISH REFUGEES: THE PRESSURE MOUNTS

REF: TEHRAN 8585 AND 8953

SUMMARY: IRANIAN AND KURDISH SOURCES BOTH CONFIRM REPORTS
REFTELS THAT LARGE NUMBERS OF REMAINING KURDISH REFUGEES
WILL SHORTLY BE FORCED RETURN IRAQ. OFFICIAL LINE IS THAT
THE LAZY MUST LEAVE BUT THOSE WISHING WORK MAY REMAIN.
KURDS DISPUTE THIS SAYING IRAN HAS AVOIDED SERIOUS EFFORT
RESETTLE KURDS AND HAS SHARPLY STEPPED UP PRESSURE INDUCE
KURDS RETURN. KURDS EXPECT 40, TO 50,000 OF PRESENT 90,000
PLUS REFUGEES WILL BE PRESSURED/FORCED RETURN IRAQ WHEN
BORDER REOPENS. END SUMMARY.

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PAGE 02 TABRIZ 00055 251258Z

1. SEPTEMBER 19-20 VISITED WEST AZERBAIJAN. PROVINCE INTELLIGENCE (SAVAK) CHIEF STATED AGREEMENT NOW BEING REACHED FOR IRAQ TO ACCEPT FURTHER RETURN OF KURDS AND THAT THOSE REFUGEES WHO REFUSE TO WORK WILL BE SENT BACK TO IRAQ. HE ADDED THAT PROVINCIAL REPS MINISTRY OF LABOR AND GOVERNORS-GENERAL ALL MAKING STRENUOUS EFFORTS IDENTIFY JOBS AND FILL THEM WITH KURDS WISHING WORK. COMMENT REGARDING LATTER INFORMATION: HAVING DEALT QUITE FRANKLY WITH THIS MAN FOR YEAR AND A HALF I BELIEVE THAT IN THIS CASE I WAS BEING "FED OFFICIAL LINE".

2. PROVINCE DIRECTOR RED LION AND SUN (IRANIAN RED CROSS) WHO ACTUALLY SUPERVISES REFUGEE CAMPS W. AZERBAIJAN INDICATED THAT ONLY A FEW JOBS HAD BEEN IDENTIFIED FOR EDUCATED OR TRAINED KURDS. HE SEEMED UNAWARE OF ANY MAJOR EFFORT RESETTLE FARMERS WHO CONSTITUTE BULK OF REFUGEES BUT DID STATE HIS BELIEF SUCH RESETTLEMENT EXTREMELY DIFFICULT SINCE IRAN HAS NO VACANT ARABLE LAND AND UNSKILLED KURDISH SPEAKING MAN-POWER OF LITTLE USE.

3. IDRIS BARZANI AND MEMBER CENTRAL COMMITTEE KDP CONTEND THAT IRAN HAS MADE NO SERIOUS EFFORT RESETTLE REFUGEES OR HELP THEM FIND WORK, THAT IT HAS IN FACT RESISTED KURDISH EFFORTS FIND WORK, HAS TOLD KURDS THEY CAN EXPECT POOR TREATMENT FROM IRAQIS BUT STILL FEELS THEY SHOULD LEAVE, AND HAS STEPPED UP PETTY HARASSMENT OF REFUGEES TO NUDGE THEM INTO LEAVING. ACCORDING KURDS THEY WERE FIRST TOLD THAT JOBS WOULD BE FOUND FOR THEM BUT THAT THEY WOULD HAVE TO WORK. KURDS THEREFORE NOMINATED FIVE REPRESENTATIVES, INCLUDING IDRIS BARZANI, TO COMMITTEE SUPPOSED MEET WITH IRANIAN GOVERNMENT REPS TEHRAN TO MATCH JOBS AND WORKERS. COMMITTEE NEVER MET AND HAS BEEN DISBANDED. SMALLER SUBCOMMITTEE EXISTS AND MEETS BUT KURDISH REPS GIVEN NOTHING TO DO. KURDS CLAIM TO HAVE REQUESTED LISTS OF AVAILABLE JOBS BUT THIS HAS NEVER BEEN FORTHCOMING. SOME OF REFUGEES WHO HAVE FOUND WORK FOR THEMSELVES HAVE BEEN DENIED PERMISSION ACCEPT JOBS. KURDS ALSO CHARGE THAT SOME OF THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN SENT TO VARIOUS PARTS OF IRAN TO WORK HAVE BEEN GIVEN ONLY HOURS NOTICE TO PACK AND LEAVE AND WERE SELECTED WITHOUT REFERENCE TO BACKGROUND OR TRAINING. THEY ALSO CLAIM THAT SOME OF THESE MOVES HAVE SPLIT EXTENDED FAMILY MEMBERS WHO WISHED REMAIN TOGETHER. KURDS NOTED THAT PROMISED MOBILE TRAINING CENTERS NEVER SENT TO CAMP AND THAT 40 ODD KURDS RECEIVING SOME TYPE TECHNICAL TRAINING IN KARAJ LESS THAN A DROP IN THE BUCKET.

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PAGE 03 TABRIZ 00055 251258Z

4. IN CAMPS, KURDS REPORT INCREASE OF HARASSMENT: BEATINGS FOR OVERSTAYING PASSES, ENTRY OF REFUGEE HOUSES TO PULL DOWN PICTURES OF BARZANI, CONSTANT INSULTS, ETC. THREE OR FOUR SMALL GROUPS OF KURDS HAVE, REPORTEDLY, BEEN SENT BACK TO IRAQ FOR INFRACTIONS OF CAMP RULES. WHEN IDRIS AND OTHERS RECENTLY IN TEHRAN THEY WERE TOLD BY IRANIANS THAT IRAQIS WOULD NOT ALLOW NEW RETURNEES TO RESETTLE IN KURDISTAN BU RATHER THEY WOULD BE SENT TO SOUTH OR

CENTRAL IRAQ. IRANIANS NEVERTHELESS TOLD KURDS THAT BULK OF REFUGEES SHOULD RETURN AND "THE MORE THAT GO THE BETTER."

5. UNDER THESE CIRCUMSTANCES KURDS FEELING INCREASINGLY INSECURE IN IRAN. THEY RENEWED THEIR APPEAL FOR US ASSISTANCE IN SPEEDILY MOVING AT LEAST SKILLED AND EDUCATED REFUGEES OUT OF IRAN AND, IF POSSIBLE, TO USA. I SAID ONLY THAT I WOULD REPORT. HOWEVER, TIME DOES SEEM TO BE RUNNING OUT. CAN DEPARTMENT AND INS RECONSIDER POSSIBILITY OF SENDING INS REP TO RUN SHORT (TWO OR THREE MONTH) REFUGEE PROGRAM IN TEHRAN? THIS WOULD NOT ONLY SPEED UP PROCESSING BUT WOULD CONSIDERABLY REDUCE FINANCIAL BURDEN ON KURDS WHO WILL OTHERWISE HAVE TO MAINTAIN THEMSELVES FOR LENGTHY PERIOD IN WESTERN EUROPE PENDING FINAL INS PROCESSING. EMBASSY TEHRAN MAY WISH ADD FURTHER COMMENT.

EMBASSY COMMENT: DEPT'S DECISION TO WORK WITH UNHCR IN THAT ORGANIZATION'S EFFORTS TO ESTABLISH KURDISH REFUGEE PROGRAM (STATE 218004) HAS RESULTED IN LENGTHY DELAY. DESPITE SADRUDDIN KAH'S AUGUST 22 LETTER SAYING HIS REPRESENTATIVE WOULD ARRIVE IN TEHRAN IN NEAR FUTURE (GENEVA 6774), UN OFFICE HERE SAYS EARLIEST ARRIVAL DATE FOR LESLIE GOODYEAR WILL BE SOMETIME DURING WEEK OF SEPTEMBER 29. IN PAST WEEK SOME 25 KURDISH REFUGEES HAVE COME TO CONSULAR SECTION REQUESTING PERMISSION TO GO TO U.S. IT IS DIFFICULT TO SEE HOW SNAIL'S-PACED PROGRAM THROUGH EUROPE CAN BE OF MUCH HELP TO KURDS FACING POSSIBLE FORCED REPATRIATION IN OCTOBER AND NOVEMBER. END EMBASSY COMMENT. NEUMANN

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